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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/22/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PHUM](#) [PE](#)
SUBJECT: WHA PDAS SHAPIRO MEETS WITH EVANGELICAL CANDIDATE
HUMBERTO LAY

REF: LIMA 1765

Classified By: Polcouns Alexander Margulies. Reason 1.4 (d).

Summary:

¶1. (C) Evangelical Pastor and ex-presidential candidate Humberto Lay stated that his party, Restauracion Nacional (RN), is on track to score seats in the next Congress during a meeting with visiting WHA PDAS Charles Shapiro on 5/17. Lay noted the contrasts between his message and Humala's as well as the irony that both battle for the same social groups, humble Peruvians in sectors C and D. Lay said he is engaged in serious talks with APRA presidential candidate Alan Garcia, who has asked Lay to prepare his people to assume a possible anti-corruption role in a Garcia government. End Summary.

¶2. (C) WHA PDAS Charles Shapiro met with Evangelical Pastor and ex-Restauracion Nacional (RN) presidential candidate Humberto Lay on 5/17.

¶3. (C) Lay stated his firm belief this his party, Restauracion Nacional, would obtain the minimum required percentage of votes (4 percent in congressional races nationwide) to gain representation in Congress. Lay said that with 84 percent of the votes counted, his party had 3.96 percent and he was optimistic about the returns waiting to be counted (many of which are from Lima, a base of support for Lay). (Note: As of 5/23, Lay's party has crossed the threshold and looks set to take three seats. End Note.)

¶4. (C) Lay described how his Christian values-based political campaign got its start. Traditionally, he noted, Evangelicals eschewed politics. Nonetheless, the moral crisis Peru faced compelled Lay and others to found Restauracion Nacional (RN) in 2000. In March of last year, Lay said RN's members pushed him to run for President. Throughout, his campaign was "austere," reaching only half of the country's thousands of Evangelical Churches. But after a late start, Lay experienced a last-minute boost in his support. He opined that his campaign's success represented an awakening for Evangelicals, and RN is now in the process of preparing candidates for regional and municipal elections in November.

Lay and Humala: Comparison/Contrast

15. (C) Lay discussed the chief irony of his campaign, the contrast between his Christian-based message and rival Ollanta Humala's implicitly authoritarian and violent approach and the fact that both groups appeal to the same social base. Lay noted that the base of the Evangelical Churches lay with Peru's C and D social classes, i.e. working poor Peruvians with an average income of USD 2 per day or more. While Restauracion Nacional welcomes supporters of all faiths, its base is among the Evangelicals and it draws heavily from these groups of people from humble circumstances. Consequently, Lay said his campaign mobilized the poor with an "anti-system" message equal in potency to Humala's, but with different ends. Where Humala is authoritarian, Lay is democratic. Where Humala implicitly promotes violence, Lay promotes solidarity. Nonetheless, Lay shares Humala's frustration with the social exclusion and upper class indifference that has promoted polarization in Peru.

16. (C) As proof of the demographic overlap in support between his candidacy and Humala's, Lay cited a recent Apoyo poll that asked supporters of first-round candidates for whom they would vote on June 4. Thirty-eight percent of Lay's supporters indicated that they would go with Alan Garcia. Even so, a substantial number, 24 percent, indicated that they would vote for Ollanta Humala.

17. (C) Despite the inclinations of some of his followers, Lay will not/not support Humala. He characterized a recent meeting with the latter as "strictly protocol." Lay has entered into serious talks with Alan Garcia about key issues for the Evangelicals (Reftel). Lay stated that Garcia had told him, "Go and prepare your people to do anti-corruption

work," an indication that the APRA candidate intends to draw on Evangelicals' moral credibility in recruiting foot soldiers and staff for the Office of the Controller General. Lay is receptive to Garcia, whom he describes as a candidate whose future "depends on his rehabilitation," a fact that makes Garcia less harmful than Humala. Lay implied that the RN congressional bloc would be open to working with a Garcia government.

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